

VZCZCXRO4332
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEH KI #0278/01 0571431
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O R 261430Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO ZEN/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO RWANDA COLLECTIVE
SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHOU/AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU 0014
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KINSHASA 000278

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CG](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [EINV](#)

SUBJECT: Task Force on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources:
Coordination, Commitment and Challenges

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Task Force on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources in the Great Lakes Region met for the fifth time on January 20-22, 2010 in Kinshasa. As the first Task Force meeting to be held in Kinshasa, and thus hosted by the government of the DRC (GDRC), much of the program consisted of formal presentations. Both the Minister and Vice Minister of Mines highlighted the need to ensure a broad range of GDRC agencies in efforts to brake the link between armed groups and the minerals trade; the need to re-establish government authority at key mining sites; the role of regional cooperation, including in regional certification systems; STAREC (stabilization and reconstruction program for eastern DRC) as a key DRC policy; and the key challenge of controlling and monitoring the beginning of the supply chain. European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Great Lakes Region Roeland van de Geer highlighted the nature of the Task Force as that of an ad hoc working group aimed at strengthening coordination and concrete actions to stop the illegal exploitation and trade of minerals in eastern DRC. The Task Force meeting was generally positive, with the GDRC re-affirming its commitment to address the illegal exploitation and trade of minerals in the eastern DRC. The GDRC also largely agreed to the proposals presented by the Task Force. The Task Force is currently reviewing the GDRC's draft response on these proposals for formal approval. While the program's presentations, including by the GDRC provided a thorough overview of the issues and challenges, they did not present much new in terms of GDRC policies or planned actions. Internal discussions among Task Force members focused largely on ensuring that the transfer of the Task Force from the capital-level to Kinshasa and the GDRC did not result in the establishment of new mechanisms or structures to support efforts to address conflict minerals. End summary.

Task Force moves to Kinshasa

¶2. (U) The January 20-22 Kinshasa meeting of the Task Force on Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources in the Great Lakes Region was attended by representatives, either from capitals or locally-based, of the following members countries or organizations: EU, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, UK, Canada, France, the United States and Spain. Representatives from the OECD, MONUC (UN Mission in Congo), ICGRL (International Conference on the Great Lakes Region), Japan, India and South Africa also attended; China did not attend. The agenda included presentations by a range of GDRC officials, members of Congolese civil society and the private sector, international and regional organizations, and international NGOs. In addition to the formal program, Task Force members met internally on two occasions, as well as in smaller meetings with

select members of the GDRC. The Task Force's proposals to the GDRC, agreed-to prior to the meeting, focused on eight areas: coordination; mapping; the legal framework; capacity building; the fight against impunity; due diligence; regional initiatives, including certification; and transparency. The GDRC provided the Task Force with an initial response to the proposal, which has been circulated to Task Force members for review and approval.

Presentations highlight commitment and challenges

¶3. (SBU) In opening the meeting on behalf of the Task Force, European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Great Lakes Roeland van der Geer provided an overview of the objectives and structure of the Task Force, highlighting that it is an informal working group aimed at helping to support and find concrete solutions to brake the link between armed groups and the minerals trade in eastern DRC. The EUSR noted the eight proposal areas presented to the GDRC, noting our shared goal of accelerating and strengthening cooperation in these areas: The EUSR highlighted the importance of coordination, including support for current and new initiatives such as STAREC and the efforts of the ICGRL. The importance of capacity building and improving the legal framework

KINSHASA 00000278 002 OF 003

were also noted. Turning to mapping, the EUSR noted mapping efforts, including by the GDRC and NGO ISPS, but acknowledged the fluidness of control of such sites as a key challenge. Finally, the EUSR discussed current efforts and challenges to promote due diligence in the sector, including initiatives by ITRI (focused on the tin supply chain) and the OECD (focused on actions by multinational companies). The key, noted the EUSR, is to address the issue from both the supply and the demand side: putting in place greater systems of control and monitoring, while at the same time ensuring that legal trade is not undermined.

¶4. (SBU) Presentations by GDRC Minister of Mines Martin Kabwelulu and Vice Minister of Mines Victor Kasango highlighted both strong GDRC commitment to braking the link between armed groups and the minerals trade in eastern DRC, and the GDRC's interest in working closely with the international community in these efforts. Both officials, as well as others from the GDRC, noted the need to re-establish government authority at key mining sites; the role of regional cooperation, including in regional certification systems; STAREC as a key DRC policy; and the key challenge of controlling and monitoring the beginning of the supply chain.

¶5. (SBU) A key component of GDRC efforts to bring greater oversight and control at the largely informal, early stage of the supply chain includes the establishment of trading centers ("centre de negoces," in French), which would allow for the deployment of various government agencies that oversee and regulate the minerals trade much closer to the mining sites. (Note: The trading center project includes five sites in North and South Kivu provinces. Construction for the first two trading centers will be launched shortly. The project is being implemented by IOM. End note.) The GDRC is also working closely with regional partners, such as the ICGRL, on the development and implementation of certification schemes. The GDRC stressed in presentations that any certification system must include regional trade partners and called on the international community to ensure support from regional countries in implementation of ICGRL efforts. Vice Minister Kasango also highlighted GDRC plans to publish a map of mining sites, which has already been initiated and will be published on the Ministry of Mines web-site when finalized. The GDRC also touched-on the sensitive issue of demilitarization of mining sites, with the Ministry of Mines promising to work with the Ministry of Defense on

the issue.

Task Force internal discussions

¶16. (SBU) Task Force members met internally on January 20 and again on January 21. The EUSR noted that while the Task Force had now moved to Kinshasa, capital level meetings would occur as necessary. A principal topic of discussion -- and concern for locally-based members in particular -- was how the Task Force would work functionally. It was stressed that the Task Force should work within existing mechanisms, including the STAREC committee and the GDRC-donor working group on the mining sector ("groupe thematique," in French), which has recently been reinvigorated in part due to the launch of the World Bank's new mining sector assistance program, Promines. (Note: The World Bank-led Promines program is a \$100 million, five year technical assistance program that focuses on a broad range of activities aimed at improving overall management of the sector. End note.).

Task Force proposals and GDRC response

KINSHASA 00000278 003 OF 003

¶17. (SBU) The GDRC presented the Task Force with an initial response on January 22 to the Task Force's proposals. The Task Force proposals include eight areas: (1) coordination and follow-up mechanisms between the GDRC and international partners; (2) mapping of mining sites; (3) clarification of the legal framework applicable to companies operating in the mining sector; (4) The fight against impunity, including against members of the Congolese army involved in illegal exploitation and trade of minerals; (5) capacity building; (6) improved due diligence; (7) regional initiatives including certification; and, (8) increased transparency in the mining sector through the implementation of EITI. The GDRC was largely receptive to the proposals presented and, in turn, provided Task Force members with a draft response that largely corresponded with the Task Force's proposals. (Note: The GDRC's response has been shared with Task Force members for review and approval. End note.).

¶18. (SBU) Comment: The Task Force meeting, the first to be hosted by the GDRC, provided a positive opportunity to discuss key issues related to conflict minerals in eastern DRC. While the GDRC used the meeting to show its commitment to addressing the issue with the cooperation of the international community, it did not provide any new ideas beyond those already known. The donor community is already actively working with the GDRC to ensure that the task force proposals, as well as structure, is advanced through the two GDRC-donor mechanisms discussed: the mining working group and the STAREC committee. Post believes that the GDRC is committed to implementing the task force proposals and that the revitalization of the mining working group, in particular, will be key to advancing these efforts. End comment.

GARVELINK